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CRITICISM OF IRRIGATION PROGRESS IN BULGARIA

The following report, which is comprised of material taken from an anti-Communist semi-weekly newspaper published in Vienna and from Bulgarian weekly and daily newspapers, indicates the progress of some irrigation projects and failure on the part of some Bulgarian officials of the irrigation system to fulfill irrigation plans. Areas mentioned include the northeast part of Bulgaria, especially Ruse Okrug, the southwest area of Blagoevgrad Okrug, the Danube River irrigation project areas, and the Rositsa Dam region and connecting canals in Turnovo Okrug.

FAILURES IN IRRIGATION SYSTEM OF DANUBE AREA -- Vienna, Interreport-Ost,
 22 Apr 53

On 21 February 1953, a special industrial court in Ruse sentenced 11 political functionaries and engineers of the "Stalin" Irrigation System at Brushlyan to imprisonment at hard labor for terms of up to 6 years. The trial took place before a secret tribunal. The sentences were not made public. They were read only to the members of political cells and of engineering staffs. Among those sentenced were Petkov Sikakov, director of the water syndicate in Ruse; Tsulev (fnu), engineer, director of the Department of Water Control under the Ministry of Agriculture; Boris Levchev, engineer, director general of the "Energokhidroprokt" Enterprise; and Mrs Lilyana Kalovyanova Valcheva, engineer, former Assistant Minister of Agriculture.

All the defendants were experienced functionaries of the Communist Party, engineers who belonged to that group which had been entrusted with responsible work under the Communist regime. None of the defendants have been accused of sabotage or of any other political crimes. The charges were confined entirely to the responsibility of these officials for the serious situation at the "Stalin" Irrigation System, at the "Dunav" (Danube) Water Syndicate, and in the entire Danube irrigation area.

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The situation in the Brushlyan irrigation area, between Brushlyan and the Black Sea, is disastrous. The situation is summarized in that portion of the accusation which charges that only 10 percent of the 1952 plan not explained further for the entire area was fulfilled. This low percentage reflects the failure of the irrigation system, which in turn explains the work stoppage in a large number of industrial projects between Ruse and Silistra. The aluminum plant and two cement plants which are located in this area and which were built only 3 years ago are in a state of dilapidation.

The devastating effect of the irrigation failure extends to the south as far as Kolarovgrad, and to the north into the Rumanian territories between Bucharest and the border. Because the agricultural enterprises between Ruse and Tolbukhin fulfilled only 65 percent of their total plan for 1952, for which they blamed the inadequate functioning of the "Stalin" Brushlyan Irrigation System, and because the Rumanian Ministry of Agriculture issued a complaint concerning the "Stalin" System's nonfulfillment of an interstate agreement to which Rumania was also a party, investigations were begun in December 1952.

These investigations brought to light further complaints, especially by the agricultural enterprises along the Danube, which blamed all irrigation installations that are fed by the Danube for the nonfulfillment of their quotas. In Bulgaria's entire agricultural area south of the Danube, disastrous crop shortages occurred in 1952. The cooperative farms of the Byala Slatina region achieved only 40 percent, and those of the Somovit region 55 percent of their respective quotas. Throughout Bulgaria, total crop yields did not exceed 70 percent of the plan.

Following the initiation of investigations, the first top level officials to be imprisoned were Mrs Valcheva, Tsulev, and Levchev. Subsequently, a number of functionaries, engineers, and workers of the "Rositsa" Dam were arrested and were accused of outright sabotage, since the masonry of the reservoir installations and the construction of the water tunnel are so weak that a disaster may be expected to occur at any moment.

Approximately 350,000 hectares of arable land were to be irrigated by the "Rostroy" Power Station and Dam System, whose 1954 capacity had been estimated at 20,000 kilowatts. However, since a low water level must be maintained because of the weak condition of the constructions, only one fourth of the estimated capacity can be realized.

The "Rostroy" System was to be completed by the end of 1953. Because of the defective masonry and the necessity for reconstruction, it will be considered quite an achievement if 12,000 kilowatts of power can be produced and 200,000 hectares of land can be made arable by the end of 1954.

At the end of February 1953, a state control commission was appointed to supervise the irrigation installations and power stations along the Danube. The composition of this commission reveals the degree of importance attached to the hydroelectric power stations and irrigation installations along the Danube. They are among the vital factors on which the fulfillment of the Bulgarian Five-Year Plan depends. Friendly relations with Rumania are largely dependent on the proper functioning of these plants.

According to agreements concluded between Bulgaria and Rumania in 1950 and 1951, 25 percent of the estimated 1954 capacity of the Danube power stations is to be supplied for the industrial requirements of southern Rumania, especially for the industrial sectors of Bucharest. Bulgaria has been unable to meet the provisions of these agreements in the past, and the Rumanian Ministry of Industry sees in this a threat to the fulfillment of its own Five-Year Plan, to Rumanian mass production, and to parts of the Rumanian export commitments. The

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failure of Bulgaria's hydroelectric power stations, therefore, has an extremely unfavorable effect upon Bulgaria's international relations with Soviet Bloc countries, since Bulgaria had been singled out to become the center of power production. Looked upon with mistrust by the other Satellites as the weakest link in the chain, Bulgaria's position is becoming increasingly difficult.

It may be assumed that the control commission will have succeeded in re-vamping the entire Danube power industry by spring 1953 and that the leading functionaries of the Bulgarian economy will be committed to forced labor camps in the not too distant future.

CONSTRUCTION OF "ROSITSA" IRRIGATION SYSTEM LAGS -- Sofia, Rabotnichesko Delo, 13 Apr 53

The "Rositsa" Dam in Gorsko Kosovo, Sevlievo Okoliya, which is the second largest dam in Bulgaria, will be operating by the middle of the second quarter of 1953. Its artificial lake will have a capacity of 260 million cubic meters of water with which it will irrigate 360,000 decares of land. The "Rositsa" VETs (Hydroelectric Power Station) will provide power for many enterprises and villages in the area.

The "Rositsa" Irrigation System is scheduled to provide water for 160,000 decares in 1953. However, the Turnovo Okrug People's Soviet and the people's soviets of the okolias served by the irrigation system have not yet designated the fields which must be irrigated. They have failed to designate the cotton fields, despite the fact that cotton is the most important crop. The persons mainly responsible for this are Dimitur Terziev, chief of the Agriculture Section of the Turnovo Okrug People's Soviet, and Dimitur Popov, chief of the Water Economy Section.

The "Vodstroy" DSP (Water Construction, State Economic Enterprise) has completed a large number of trunk and auxiliary canals in the western part of the irrigation system. However, the construction of syphons and distributors is lagging. Twenty gates are missing on the two Butovo canals. Work is lagging at the auxiliary canals near Rositsa, Byala Cherkova, Nedan, Patresh, Butovo, and Gradishte. Work on the Nikyup trunk canal especially is lagging. A total of 25 kilometers of the canal network near Khotnitsa dn Resen in Turnovo Okoliya and near Polikraishte in Gorna Oryakhovitsa Okoliya must still be completed. The DSP failed to mobilize all available manpower to work on the project on especially favorable days. The dikes of the canals are poorly constructed.

Ivan Karaganev, a planner of the DEP, failed to order sufficient trucks from the SOAT (General Automobile Transportation Union) in Pavlikeni. As a result, there was a shortage of raw materials at the site. During April 1953, instead of 80 work groups with a total of 400 workers, only 20 work groups with a total of 80 workers were working at the site. The Pavlikeni Okoliya People's Soviet and the Okoliya Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party are also responsible for not obtaining a sufficient number of vehicles to transport material and for not recruiting sufficient manpower. Yordan Damyanov and Ivan Rudev, chairmen of the Nedan and Gradishte TKZS (cooperative labor farms) [in Pavlikeni Okoliya] respectively, have been very uncooperative, the former with regard to furnishing vehicles, and the latter with regard to helping to build an irrigation system to irrigate 12,400 decares of TKZS land. Such incidents make it necessary for the construction organization ["Vodstroy" DSP?] to recruit manpower from Pleven and Svishtov okolias.

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The construction of pumping stations for irrigating rice paddies in Polski Trumbesh, Radanovo, and Karantsi in Turnovo Okoliya, and in Krusheto, Vurbitsa, and Bryagovitsa in Gorna Oryakhovitsa Okoliya is lagging seriously. Members of TKZS in these villages are not sure that they will receive the pumps and electric motors from the Ministry of Agriculture in time to irrigate.

The "Vodno Stopanstvo" Upravlenie (Water Economy Administration) of the Ministry of Agriculture is primarily responsible for the very slow progress in the construction of the "Rositsa" Irrigation System. This administration did not give any help to the "Vodproekt" (Water Project) and "Vodstroy" enterprises in Pavlikeni. According to Order No 894, dated 2 October 1952, of the Ministry of Agriculture, the "Rositsa" Irrigation System should have started its trial operation before 15 May 1953.

"PIRINSKA BISTRITSA" IRRIGATION SYSTEM -- Blagoevgrad, Pirinsko Delo, 14 Feb 53

A few years after the liberation in 1944, the first phase in the construction of the "Pirinska Bistritsa" Irrigation System, the "Asen Itov" Canal and auxiliary canals in Blagoevgrad Okrug, was completed. The government gave 600 million old leva for the construction of the irrigation system. In 1952, the partially completed system irrigated 8,000 decares of land in the okrug. During 1952, 17,000 ^[sic] kilometers of the trunk canal, 23 kilometers of the main distribution canals, and 30 kilometers of auxiliary canals were completed. These canals were provided with 11 syphons, 3 tunnels, 15 aqueducts, 3 millrace bridges, and 2 bridges.

The irrigation system will be important to the Sandanski and Petrich okoliyas, where over 70,000 decares of land belonging to 15 villages will be irrigated in 1953. During this winter and early spring, the construction work on the irrigation system will be completed. By 1 June 1953, the remaining section of the trunk irrigation canal, as well as 11 kilometers of the main distribution canal between Khursovo and Marikostinovo, will be completed. The Zigveliyski canal, which is 8 kilometers long, and the entire auxiliary canal network, which is 204 kilometers long, as well as all the equipment of the irrigation system, will be completed at that time.

According to Dimitur Blagoev, Vice-Chairman of the Blagoevgrad Okrug People's Soviet, the first phase of the construction of the trunk irrigation canal has been completed. This canal is now able to irrigate 30,000 decares of land. In addition, 8,000 decares are being irrigated near Katuntsi and Vranja, in Sandanski Okoliya, and near Kulata, Chuchuligovo, and Dolno Spanchevo, in Petrich Okoliya.

IRRIGATION IN GOTSE DELCHEV -- Blagoevgrad, Pirinsko Delo, 28 Feb 53

The canal on the right bank of the Mesta River, which was originally 61 kilometers long, has been lengthened 16 kilometers. As a result, the fields of nine villages in Gotse Delchev Okoliya, as well as the border village of Khadzhidimovo, are being irrigated. Near the left bank of the Mesta River, a new 20-kilometer canal has been dug to irrigate the fields of eight villages ^[in the okoliya], as well as some land of the village of Blatska. Gotse Delchev pole (field) is broken up by 163 kilometers of trunk and secondary canals, which irrigate 53,000 decares of land planted primarily with tobacco, vegetables, sunflowers, corn, and rice. Some areas are still without water. However, a pumping station is being installed this winter in the area of Debren, and another in the area of Mosomishte. These two pumping stations will irrigate 4,000 decares of land. By 25 March 1953, the canals in Gotse Delchev pole will be cleaned out.

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IRRIGATION IN PETRICH AND SANDANSKI OKOLIYAS -- Blagoevgrad, Pirinsko Delo,
21 Mar 53

According to As. Iliev, engineer, Petrich and Sandanski okoliyas have prolonged droughts and extreme heat almost every year. The area around Laskarevo is the driest in Sandanski Okoliya and should be irrigated. Dzhigurovo and Ladarevo in Sandanski Okoliya could also be irrigated. Laskarevo and Ladarevo are near the Sklavaska River. Over 2,000 decares near Dzhigurovo, Debrene, and Polenitsa could be irrigated with the water of the river which passes Bozhdovo. The waters of the streams passing Starchevo, Mikhnevo, Kurnalovo, and Kavra-kirovo could be exploited for irrigation purposes. The Kantonsko stream could irrigate the areas in the "Tumbite" locality and city areas. The Petrichka River also should be exploited and the area around Belasitsa should be irrigated.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM UNDER CONSTRUCTION -- Blagoevgrad, Pirinsko Delo, 11 Apr 53

For the past two months, 300 TKZS members from Mirovo, Chirpan Okoliya, have been building their local irrigation system along the Maritsa River. The irrigation canals built there will be 40 kilometers long. Two large pumps will pump the water from the river and irrigate 4,000 decares of land in the area.

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